

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PARIS 28988 311535Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----045719 311546Z /50

O R 311312Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6738
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
USMISSION USUN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ROME

S E C R E T PARIS 28988

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, PINS, LE, SY, IS
SUBJ: LEBANON SITUATION

REF: STATE 221467

1. THIS MORNING (AUGUST 31) WE DISCUSSED LEBANON SITUATION AS INSTRUCTED REFTEL WITH QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR THE MIDDLE EAST (AND ACTING DIRECTOR FOR ME AND NORTH AFRICA) HENRI SERVANT. WE ASKED THAT THE GOF USE ITS INFLUENCE WITH THE SYRIANS TO BRING ABOUT AN IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE. SERVANT WAS AWARE

SECRET

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PAGE 02 PARIS 28988 311535Z

OF OUR CONCERN IN THIS REGARD AS WE HAD TAKEN THE INITIATIVE YESTERDAY TO INFORM HIM OF THE DEMARCHE AMBASSADOR SEELYE WAS TO MAKE IN DAMASCUS.

2. SERVANT DESCRIBED THE SITUATION IN LEBANON AS VERY BAD AND EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF OUR PARTICULAR CONCERNS IN THIS PERIOD BEFORE THE CAMP DAVID MEETING.

SERVANT SAID THAT THE GOF HAD URGED RESTRAINT ON THE SYRIANS ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, MOST RECENTLY DURING ELYSEE SECRETARY GENERAL FRANCOIS-PONCET AUGUST 1 VISIT TO DAMASCUS WHEN HE PASSED A MESSAGE FROM GISCARD URGING THE SYRIANS TO AVOID RESPONDING TO PROVOCATIONS. THE SITUATION NOW, HOWEVER, HAS GONE BEYOND WHAT IT WAS THEN. SERVANT SAID HE BELIEVED THAT THE SITUATION WAS MADE PARTICULARLY DANGEROUS BECAUSE THE SYRIANS HAD THE SUPPORT OF THE OTHER ARAB STATES FOR THEIR POLICIES, THOUGH PERHAPS NOT FOR EACH SPECIFIC ACTION. THIS LACK OF EXTERNAL ARAB RESTRAINT ON SYRIAN ACTIONS WAS, HE BELIEVED, BECOMING MORE MARKED AS THE CHRISTIANS INCREASINGLY ASSOCIATED THEMSELVES WITH THE ISRAELIS. WE TOLD SERVANT THAT WE ARE CONSCIOUS OF THIS ARAB FACTOR AND INFORMED HIM THAT WE ARE URGENTLY MAKING KNOWN OUR CONCERNS TO THE SAUDI FOREIGN MINISTER.

3. SERVANT APPEARED TO BELIEVE THAT A FRENCH APPROACH TO THE SYRIANS AT THIS TIME WOULD BE WARRANTED. HE UNDERTOOK TO INFORM THE CABINET OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF OUR DEMARCHE IMMEDIATELY AND TO LET US KNOW OF ANY ACTION THE GOF DECIDES TO TAKE.
HARTMAN

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NNN

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